

## Bloomfield Citizen.

WEEKLY JOURNAL

PUBLISHED BY

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THE CITIZEN solicits contributions from the general public on any subject—political, religious, educational, or social—so long as they do not contain any personal attacks.

All communications must be accompanied by the writer's name, not necessarily for publication, but as an evidence of good faith.

Advertisements for insertion in the current week must be in hand not later than Friday noon.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 1, 1903.

## Too Much Exemption.

The exemptions from taxation in this county under various legislative enactments are growing to enormous proportions.

The classes of property exempt from assessment for taxes include school property, both public and private; public property owned by the various municipalities, property used for church and charitable purposes, and cemeteries and graveyards. The total value of these exempt properties as determined by the County Board, is \$25,613,700, of which there is located in Newark, \$25,650,000 worth, leaving \$8,963,700 as the combined value of all exempt property in the rest of the county.

The greatest value is placed upon public property of which there is more than \$18,000,000 worth in the county, \$15,000,000 of which is represented in lands and buildings around the city of Newark. Church and charitable property ranks second in value, upward of \$10,000,000 of this class being represented on the assessors' books. There is nearly \$4,500,000 worth of public school property, and more than \$1,000,000 worth of other school property. The lands used for interment of the dead in the county represent a value according to the official estimate of nearly \$1,700,000.

## Nearby Tax Rates.

The East Orange Tax Assessors reconsidered their original decision and fixed the tax rate at \$2.74. Despite the increase in the county rate of 10½ points, the increase over last year's rate is only two points. This is due to the increase in valuations of about \$664,000, and a decrease of \$1,000 in the amount needed for running the city government.

It is announced that the tax rate for South Orange township for this year outside of the village of South Orange would be 2.03, and the rate for the village and the township combined would be 2.25, which is 15 points higher than that of last year.

Assessor Lewis T. Terry of Springfield has announced that the tax rate will not be nearly so large as was expected. Although there has been a slight increase in the county rate over that of a year ago, township property-owners will have to pay but 2.28 on the \$100. This is a reduction of twelve points from last year, and the lowest rate in three years—this, too, in spite of the fact that the interest money on the new public school is included in the levy.

An increase of about thirteen points is anticipated in the Glen Ridge Borough tax rate this year.

Though the reports of the assessor are not all in, it is estimated that the tax rate in West Orange this year will be 2.86 as against 2.76 for last year. This increase is accounted for by the high county rate, as there is nothing in the town to cause an increase. Valuations in West Orange have been raised about \$200,000 during the past year.

## Sunday Work.

The officials of this town will be requested to exercise their authority in an endeavor to stop Sunday work on the pipe line now being laid in Bloomfield Avenue. Last Sunday the contractors had four hundred men at work in this town and the borough of Glen Ridge. The people in Glen Ridge made a protest against such an open disregard of Sunday and the gross violation of the law, and have asked the borough officials to take the necessary action to have Sunday respected and the law obeyed. The borough authorities have decided not to permit Sunday work on that part of the pipe line within the limits of the borough.

The proprietor of a popular West Orange hotel is endeavoring to study out the solution of a Bloomfield game known as "odds you lose."

Ladies' costumes, shirt-waist suits, fancy waists, cut and basted. Finishing touches to home-made gowns, lace and embroidered collars for sale. High grade patterns cut to measure. Call 10 A. M. to 4 P. M. Mondays and Saturdays excepted. Mrs. Conway, 57 Clinton Street near Washington Street, Somerset of 1734 Broadway, N. Y.—Add.

## Plea for Fair Play.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CITIZEN:

SIR: Thus far the Town Engineer has been the target for the criticism that has arisen over the Linden Avenue improvement work. If the question at issue is simply one of mistakes in the measurement of the amount of work of various kinds done, then there can be no question as to where to fix the blame. Mr. Olmsted, being the party relied upon by the Town Council to attend to such work and make the measurements, and being paid to perform that work, is clearly in the wrong if the alleged shortages in the measurements really exist. But there appear to be two sides to this question, and some of us who have known Mr. Olmsted for years and know that he has at least a fair reputation as an engineer and surveyor are disposed to ask that the Linden Avenue property-owners cease pounding the engineer until some other features of this perplexing case are thoroughly ventilated.

Mr. Olmsted claims (and there seems to be no official contradiction of his claim) that there was no specific understanding when the Linden Avenue improvement work was begun as to the manner in which the assessment for the cost of the work was to be levied. Mr. Olmsted's understanding of the case was that it was a general petition for a general improvement to be paid for by a general apportionment of the cost among the property-owners. It will be conceded that on the face of it such a proposition does not appear to embody a just course of action in the case of particular property-owners whose property was in a complete state of improvement before the work was undertaken.

The main issue in the case is the method of levying the assessment, but it has been obscured by a minor issue, namely, the correctness of the measurements. Assuming the measurements to be correct, the question of the method of levying the assessment would be the only issue, and it would be one with which the engineering department of the town would have nothing to do except that of furnishing data as to the amount of work done and the measurement of individual frontages along the street. Considered from the standpoint alone of the method of levying the assessment, Mr. Olmsted is eliminated from the case as soon as he hands over his data to the Town Council or, by that body's direction, to the Board of Assessors.

It is easy to perceive that if no question had been raised as to the correctness of the measurements and the Board of Assessors had treated the improvement as a matter of general benefit to the street, a number if not a majority of the property-owners would have protested against the adoption of such a method.

Again, if the Board of Assessors had levied an assessment on the basis of the specific amount of work done in front of each individual property-owner's premises, not a few of the property-owners would have protested against the enormity of their bills, and declare that they would never have signed the petition for the improvement if they had known that it was to have been regarded in any other way but a general improvement and treated in a general way in the assessment of the cost. It is obvious that as soon as the Linden Avenue property-owners can be brought to discern that there is a larger question than that of the mere correctness of the measurement involved in their case, the sooner they will be on the right road towards a settlement of it.

It should be kept clearly in view that Mr. Olmsted has nothing to do with the method of fixing the assessment. It is a matter that belongs to another department of government, and in so far as determining the method, it matters not whether Mr. Olmsted be dead or alive, he does not figure at all in that feature of the case and has no voice in it. His position is a minor and subservient one, simply that of furnishing data. If the figures he gives are wrong that simply results in clerical errors in the bills and has nothing whatever to do with the questions of legality and equity that enter into the formulating of the procedure in making the assessment.

It must be confessed that in fixing upon a method of levying the Linden Avenue assessment the Town Council is confronted with a problem that is by no means easy of solution. It must be apparent to some of the members of the Council that this diverting of attention from the real issue involved, and making Mr. Olmsted the point of attack, and laying all the blame on his shoulders, is simply a waste of energy and permitting the property-owners to get unduly excited over a minor issue in the case.

Mr. Olmsted's claim that there was no definite understanding when the Linden Avenue work was commenced as to how the cost was to be assessed is undoubtedly true. Some of the property-owners may have had their own ideas on that matter, and all the property-owners may have varied in their opinions, but Mr. Olmsted's declaration alludes only to official understanding, and his assertion is undoubtedly true, for as yet there has been no official declaration as to the right and proper method to be pursued in levying the assessment.

The engineering department of the government is through with Linden

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## BONED OR POTTED MEAT,

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Avenue except as to proving the correctness of the data it has furnished to the Town Council. When the Council in the exercise of its executive functions instructs the Board of Assessors as to the method that is to be pursued in making the assessment, the case will speedily be settled.

There is another feature of this case which entitles Mr. Olmsted to a little clemency, and that is the prolonged time that it has been hanging in the air, so to speak. That is not the engineer's fault, it is not the Board of Assessors' fault, and the Town Council as a body has had no opportunity of acting upon the case otherwise than receiving indefinite reports from sub-committees having the matter in charge.

## FAIR PLAY.

## Cause of Slow Growth.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CITIZEN:

SIR: There are many streets in this town devoid of such improvements as light, water, and sewers. The primitive condition of such streets is a detriment to their development and is one of the causes of the slow growth of the town in taxable valuations. The town is amply supplied with ordinances that make it hazardous for a person to build on such streets, owing to the risk of coming in contact with sanitary rules and regulations that cannot be complied with without incurring great expense. The town has put on all the trills of a well regulated and finely equipped city, but in many instances only the most primitive conditions are available to the party who may have a desire to build a home. It is these faulty conditions that so widely exist here that are in a large measure responsible for the small and slow increase of taxable valuations in the town.

If low valuations and a low tax rate prevailed here, it might be said that the fault was due to the people; that public enterprise was lacking, and that the natural tendency was towards a slothful satisfaction with a primitive condition of local conditions.

But such is not the case. All things considered and on a basis of comparison with other towns, valuations for purposes of assessments are high and there is no question but what the tax rate is high. These high valuations and high tax rates are due to the efforts of the people to place the town in good position in the matter of schools, good roads, sewer, light and water. In order to enjoy these things the people have patiently endured high valuations and high tax rates in the hope that the fact that the town was thus supplied would lead to rapid development and increased taxable valuations and a consequent lower tax rate.

Expectations have not been fulfilled and the outlook is for many more years of high taxes. But conditions will be much improved if streets now available for building purposes can be put in such shape that building enterprises will be encouraged rather than discouraged. X.

## Spoons from the Philippines.

Mrs. Sarah Wolven of Benson street received in the mails Thursday from her son, First Lieutenant Frank Wolven, a dental surgeon, three solid silver spoons, made and engraved by the only plater, or silversmith, in the Philippine Islands. The handles of two of the spoons represent banana and coconut trees, and the third bears the coat-of-arms of Spain. Lieutenant Wolven is now located on Malaga Island, in the province of Batangas, eight miles from Cavite, upon which is situated the military prison. He is expected to return home the latter part of September after two years' duty.

## Cultivating the Beautiful.

In these days when the Board of Trade is endeavoring to promote an aesthetic spirit among the citizens with respect to keeping sidewalks, streets and premises in clean and orderly condition, and as far as possible develop the artistic and beautiful, the premises of Victor Corrao on Washington Street are deserving of particular mention. Washington street people claim that in the point of artistic beauty Mr. Corrao's flower garden is the finest in the town.

## A Gross Outrage.

The grandstand on the Arlington avenue base-ball grounds appears to be a favorite resort for hoodlums, and the members of the base-ball club have been put to a great deal of annoyance and expense on account of the malicious and filthy work of the hoodlums. There is no other recourse open to the club now but to make strenuous efforts to obtain the names of the youth who perpetrate the mischief and damage in and about the stand and have them arrested. It was naturally expected that the grandstand would be a rendezvous for boys during the week and would be used as a play house. There was no particular objection to the boys congregating there for purposes of legitimate amusement but the privilege has been outrageously abused and the members of the club will be amply justified in prosecuting the offenders to the utmost extent of the law.

## Increasing Town Wealth.

It is estimated that the Essex County Building and Loan Association has made loans for building purposes since the spring of 1902 aggregating over \$100,000 in amount and that about 90 per cent. of the money loaned has been invested in new homes here in town. This association has been highly instrumental as a home builder, and as each home adds to the taxable valuations the whole town derives a benefit in a general way from the association's work. Statistics will be published shortly showing the number of homes that the association has assisted in building within the past year.

## Want Five-Cent Fare.

The Montclair people are endeavoring to have the Public Service Corporation adopt a five-cent fare from Montclair to Newark on the Bloomfield avenue trolley line and do away with the ticket inspector at the Glen Ridge Borough line.

Doing any **PRESERVING** this year?

You do if you can, and preserving and canning are best and most cheaply done on a **GAS RANGE**. Get one and try it. Then you'll be so well satisfied that you'll want to do all your cooking with it.

They cost only \$12.00, \$13.00, and \$13.50.

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Public Service Corporation of New Jersey.

Montclair District, 458 Bloomfield Avenue.

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Office: 7 Broad Street,

Bloomfield, N. J.

SURPLUS, - - \$67,477.18

NEW ACCOUNTS RECEIVED

Interest Dividends Declared Jan. 1st and July 1st

